

3. Comparative Poetics Today: Not Global without the Middle East.

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Abstract:

Two trends played a significant role in the development of Comparative poetics: a movement toward literary theory and a movement toward non-Western cultures in comparative literature studies. In the second half of the twentieth century Western scholars of comparative literature, including Étiemble, Weisstein, Praver, Liu and Miner, paid attention to literary theory in comparative literary studies. Inspired by the multiculturalism of the 1990s, comparatists made efforts to broaden the canon and include non-Western literatures. Comparatists have followed Miner's anti-West-centrism and they have also failed to expand the geographical frontiers of his Comparative Poetics. While Far Eastern and Indian critical traditions have played a significant role in the field of comparative poetics, the Middle Eastern tradition and Persian literature have been neglected. The joint efforts of the scholars of Middle Eastern literatures to write in English and/or to translate their works into English will provide that critical tradition with a voice in the not yet global dialogue of comparative poetics. The emergent plurivocal conversation of a comparative poetics that includes Middle East will open new horizons to our cross-cultural perspective.

Keywords:

Comparative Poetics; Earl Miner; Comparative Literature; Literary Theory; Non-Western Cultures; the Middle East; Persian Literature.